

A man with dark hair, wearing a light-colored sweater, is sitting at a desk and smiling while looking at a laptop. His hand is resting on his chin. The background is a bright, slightly blurred office setting.

WORK A SCHEDULE THAT FITS YOUR LIFESTYLE

Traditionally, much of the labor force has worked in a structured environment, with a standard nine-to-five, five-day work schedule. As times have changed, schedules have become more hectic, traffic has increased and more people have found themselves struggling to balance work and leisure time. With so much demand being placed on an individual's time, many employees and employers are discovering that alternative work arrangements enable employees to arrange their schedules according to their lifestyles.

FLEXIBLE WORK HOURS AND COMPRESSED WORKWEEKS

Flexible work hours and compressed workweeks allow employees variability in the times they begin and end their workday and which days of the week they work. Working non-standard hours in fewer days helps to meet the TravelWise goals of optimizing mobility, improving air quality and reducing energy consumption. Alternate work schedules allow employees to travel less each week and during off-peak traffic times, thus contributing to the TravelWise goals.

DID YOU KNOW?

Teleworking is often used together with flexible work hours and compressed workweek programs.

CASE STUDY: FIRST TENNESSEE BANK

According to a 2010 report from the Executive Office of the President, providing flexible schedules may impact a company's bottom line. When the First Tennessee Bank implemented a flexible work program, its customer retention rate went from 89 percent to 96 percent, 9 points above the industry average. This impressive statistic can be linked to increased productivity in the bank's accounts-reconciliation department.

Source: Executive Office of the President Work-Life Balance and the Economics of Workplace Flexibility, March 2010

ADVANTAGES OF ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

Research shows that employees who have control over their schedules are more motivated and committed, which reduces turnover costs and the risk of employee burnout. Employers may also notice improved revenue and reduced expenses in addition to increased productivity and employee satisfaction. For companies that do business in different time zones, flexible schedules allow them to extend their business day for more hours of operation and customer service.

Flexible work hours and compressed workweeks are not only good for business, they are good for employees too, as they enable them to better balance their work life with other responsibilities, and manage their schedule according to their needs. Employees can also save time on their commute by driving fewer days each week and avoiding rush-hour traffic. An alternative work schedule may also make it more feasible to match ridesharing and transit schedules to work hours.

WHERE TO START

- Evaluate which positions require presence at all times during normal business hours, and whether or not each position's responsibilities are measured by results or hours on the clock.
- Not all positions will be appropriate for both flexible hours and compressed weeks; some may only be suitable for one or the other.
- Survey employees to determine their level of interest in alternative schedules.
- Acknowledge and reward the individuals who participate in the program by creating incentives or rewards—after all, they are reducing the number of cars during peak traffic hours, thus improving air quality and benefitting all of us.

ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULE OPTIONS

Flexible hours and compressed workweeks allow employees to work a traditional 35 to 40-hour workweek in less than five days.

A flexible work hour program could include a five-day workweek with non-traditional hours, like 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., or 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Most, if not all, successful compressed workweek programs, also have flexible hours.

Options can include:

Four 10-hour days

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

Week of five nine-hour days followed by a week of four nine-hour days

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
S	M	T	W	T	F	S

Three 12-hour days

S	M	T	W	T	F	S

ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULES RESOURCES

Handbook on Alternative Work Schedules:
www.opm.gov/oqa/aws

Victoria Transport Policy Institute - Alternative Work Schedules:
www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm15.htm

US Department of Labor:
www.dol.gov/dol/topic/workhours/flexibleschedules.htm